



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#79)

Good News – God's role in *our* choices; responding to God's Word.

1

ACCOMPLISHING OUR SALVATION...

GOD'S SOVEREIGNTY.
We often don't realize what God did to save us, until we read about it later, in Scripture.

And each day *the Lord added* to their group those who were being saved.
Acts 2:47b (NLT)

OUR RESPONSIBILITY.
What we do involves (1) **Conviction** and (2) **Change**; and it results in (3) **Consequences**.

Yet even what *WE* do involves interacting with God.
He has spoken, and we must respond!

[God] commands all people everywhere to repent.
Acts 17:30b (NIV)

I MUST DECIDE HOW I AM GOING TO RESPOND!

2

God is the focus of in OUR choices...

in **#1 Conviction** → We must respond to what **GOD** says.

in **#2 Change** → We must decide if we're going to follow **JESUS**.

in **#3 Consequences** → We must trust **GOD** to accomplish what he has promised.

If we choose to follow Jesus...
GOD will be **FIRST** in our lives, both *now* and *forever*.

3

#1 Conviction → We must respond to what God says.

CONVICTION INVOLVES OUR RESPONSE TO THE FACTS OF SCRIPTURE:

- ✓ The "*foundational facts*" we need to know *before* we can understand the Good News.
- ✓ The "*Good News facts*." **WE'VE ALREADY LOOKED AT THESE ISSUES.**

THIS MUST BE OUR ATTITUDE:
When you received God's word from us, you realized it wasn't the word of humans. Instead, you accepted it for *what it really is—the word of God*. This word is at work in you believers.
1 Thes. 2:13b (GW)

4

#1 Conviction → There are two issues involved.

CONVICTION ISSUE #1 – WE MUST BE MADE AWARE OF THE FACTS.

This normally involves *people* telling others about the Bible and its message.

But how can they call on [Jesus] to save them unless they believe in him? And how can they believe in him if they have never heard about him? **And how can they hear about him unless someone tells them?**
Romans 10:14 (NLT)

5

AWARENESS OF THE FACTS:
In Acts, there are many examples of people being told the facts. (Of course, people must also be willing to *listen!*)

... they continued **teaching** and **proclaiming** the good news ...
Acts 5:42b (CSB)

But many who **heard** the message believed, ...
Acts 4:4a (NIV)

... Paul was **explaining** the kingdom of God to them.
Acts 28:23b (GW)

... the man [was] reading from the prophet Isaiah; so [Philip] asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?"
The man replied, "How can I, when there is no one to **instruct** me?"
So Philip began with this same Scripture and then used many others to **tell** him the Good News about Jesus.
Acts 8:30b-31a, 35 (NLT)

6

CONVICTION ISSUE #2 – WE MUST ACCEPT THOSE FACTS AS TRUE.

Once aware of the facts, people have to respond – by either accepting those facts, or rejecting them.

Many of the Corinthians, **when they heard**, believed and were baptized.
Acts 18:8b (CSB)

When they heard this, they were furious and wanted to put them to death.
Acts 5:33 (NIV)

When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some began to ridicule him, but others said, "We'd like to hear from you again about this." ... However, some people joined him and believed, ...
Ac 17:32, 34a (CSB)

↳ ["Hear from you again" = possibly a "polite" rejection of the message... like Felix, in Acts 24:24-26.]

NOTE: When people reject the Bible facts, the problem isn't the facts, but the people.

"How **stubborn** can you be? How can you be so **heartless** and **disobedient**? You're just like your ancestors. They always **opposed** the Holy Spirit, and so do you!"
Acts 7:51 (GW)

But some of them became **obstinate**; they **refused** to believe and publicly **maligned** the Way.
Acts 19:9a (NIV)

... they were **jealous**; so they **slandered** Paul and **argued** against whatever he said.
Acts 13:45b (NLT)

But because of your **stubbornness** and your **unrepentant** heart, ...
Romans 2:5a (NIV)

IMPORTANT ISSUE: CONVICTION (awareness and acceptance of the facts) must occur before **CHANGES** can occur in a person's life.

CONVICTION → **CHANGE** → **CONSEQUENCES**

Those who accepted what Peter said → ...were baptized. → That day about 3,000 people were added {to the group}.
Acts 2:41 (GW)

CONVICTION → **CHANGE**

Many Corinthians who heard Paul → believed and were baptized.
Acts 18:8b (GW)

CONVICTION → **CHANGE**

... Philip told the official the Good News about Jesus. → The official said to Philip, "Look, there's some water. What can keep me from being baptized?"
Acts 8:35b, 36b (GW)

QUESTION: Can there be other influences, besides the Word of God?

As we've seen in past studies, God can use other things – circumstances, people, miraculous events, etc. – as pointers to the truth. But they cannot save. We need God and his Word for that!

Such things can lead a person in the right direction. Or they can reinforce a chosen path (after the choice has been made). But they are NOT the focus of attention!

A MODERN EXAMPLE:

Today, in Islamic countries, Muslims frequently have visions or dreams that point to Jesus. But it isn't until they go to the Bible that they find out who this "Jesus" really is.

God often uses "every-day circumstances" to point people to the way of salvation.

You can just "happen" to be somewhere that the Good News is being proclaimed.

[Paul] spoke daily in the public square to **all who happened to be there**.
Acts 17:17b (NLT)

God has also used extraordinary events (including miracles) to point the way.

As we look at examples in the book of Acts, we discover that even miracles are not the primary focus. They are normally associated with people proclaiming the Good News, or with one's acceptance of the Good News.

↳ **What we find in Acts ...**

1. Sometimes God used miraculous events to provide the opportunity to proclaim the Good News.

Peter heals a beggar – Acts 3:1-11. → This miracle brings the people together to hear **the Good News** message – Acts 3:1-26; 4:8-12.

God did miracles through Paul – Acts 19:11. → **The message about the Lord** spread and accomplished its work – Acts 19:20.

Philip performed miraculous signs – Acts 8:6. → The people paid attention to **what he said** – Acts 8:6.*

* This is in stark contrast with Simon the magician, who was more interested in the miraculous signs – Acts 8:13.

2. Sometimes miraculous events occurred with the proclamation of the Good News.*

The sorcerer was made temporarily blind – Acts 13:8-11.



The proconsul was paying attention to **the word of God** – Acts 13:7,12.

Paul and Barnabas spent much time speaking to others about **the Good News** – Acts 14:3a.



God confirmed the message with miracles – Acts 14:3b.

Some passages just mention miraculous events as occurring...



... during a time that people were **being saved** – Acts 5:12; 6:7-8.

* (It is sometimes difficult to determine whether the miraculous events occurred before or during the proclamation of the Good News.)

3. On one occasion, miraculous events occurred after people accepted the Good News and began following Jesus.

Paul explained **the Good News**; the people were baptized – Acts 19:4-5.



Then the Holy Spirit came, they spoke in tongues, etc. – Acts 19:6.

4. In one instance, miraculous events occurred before and after the Good News was accepted.

Cornelius, already a God-fearing individual, was instructed in a vision to call for Peter and listen to what he had to say – Acts 10:1-3, 22.



Peter tells them about Jesus – Acts 10:34-43.



The Holy Spirit comes; the people begin speaking in tongues; Peter recognizes that God has saved them, and orders that they be baptized – Acts 10:44-48.

5. In one instance, God used a miraculous "disaster" to point people toward salvation and spiritual growth.

Some unsaved Jews tried to cast out demons in Jesus' name. The evil spirit attacks and beats them. People hear about this event – Acts 19:13-17a.



Then people began to fear God, honor Jesus, repent of hidden sins... and **the Word of the Lord** spreads across the region – Acts 19:17b-20.

AS WE CAN SEE, to whatever extent these passages go into detail about what happened, the focus or conclusion of the event is **the proclamation of the Good news and/or spiritual growth.**

The miraculous event is NOT the ultimate focus.



This week's MISSION! (Regarding: #1 Conviction)

CONSIDER your response to the **FACTS** of the Bible!

✓ **ARE YOU AWARE OF THE BIBLE FACTS?**

Have others told you about them?
Or, have you looked for yourself?

✓ **HAVE YOU ACCEPTED THE BIBLE FACTS AS TRUE?**

REMEMBER THIS!

WHETHER YOU TREAT THE **GOOD NEWS FACTS** AS **God's FACTS** OR AS **PEOPLE'S OPINIONS** ...

THAT makes all the difference.

Credits

SCRIPTURE

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